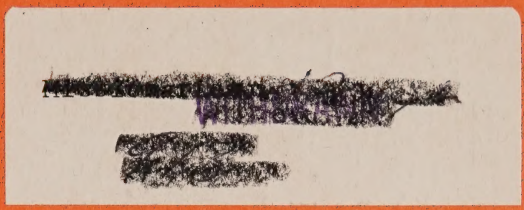
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WILLIAM WANLESS, M. D. of INDIA

By Lillian E. Wanless

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INTRODUCTION

DR. WILLIAM J. WANLESS was undoubtedly one of the great medical missionaries of all time. This brief sketch, written by his wife, is an attempt to recapture something of the man and the scene of his labors.

Dr. Wanless made three monumental contributions in medical missions, any one of which would have been a great life achievement. The first of these was the Miraj Hospital, now called Wanless Hospital, which was for many years the leading Christian hospital in India. In the second place, he created, almost single-handed, the Miraj Medical School, which for a half century was an invaluable part of missions and medical education in India. Finally, in the last years of his life, he founded the tuberculosis sanatorium which bears his name.

As an educator his name was spread through India from Travancore to the Punjab. As a surgeon he performed nearly 100,000 operations. On furloughs he was a success as a lecturer; he spoke fluently and interestingly, and gained many recruits for foreign missions.

In India he never forgot that he was first and last a missionary. He believed that the work of healing is a demonstration of the Gospel of Christ's love. In conversation he did not talk of himself or of the hospitals he built but rather of the growth of Christian communities.

EDWARD M. DODD, M.D.

WANLESS

WE must be brave,
For Heaven has deprived us of a friend–
And what a friend, so able and so true.
The world seems dead, but yet his memories send
Their inspiration, and light up anew
Our smouldering spark of purpose to be brave.

We must be strong,
For he had gifts to drive away our pain,
And oft we sought his counsel and his aid.
That skill cannot respond to calls again–
A thought that leaves us shattered and afraid
Until we know that he would have us strong.

We must be kind,
For he had drunk full deep at Mercy's fount
And, strengthened there, could lighten others' cares.
To follow worthily we too must mount
And drink, must deeply breathe those heavenly airs–
To be like him to all humanity kind.

To SIR WILLIAM WANLESS

R. H. H. GOHEEN, M.D.
Miraj Hospital, 1940-1945

I

MY BOY is very sick, doctor. You must save him. I can't let him go! You must not let him die!" The distracted mother's words sounded to the doctor like orders. "I'll do what I can," he answered. "No doctor can do more."

William James, the patient, was the eighteen-year-old son of John and Elizabeth Wanless, residents of Toronto, Canada. The doctor did not understand the mother's feelings; probably not even the father understood entirely, but to his mother, William James represented more than an ordinary child.

Elizabeth Wanless's two small sons, William and James, had died at the same time of diphtheria, and when another son was born it seemed to her that he had been sent to replace them. She gave him both of their names and she looked forward with hope and faith to the place he would fill in the world. Now it seemed as though all her hopes would be dashed to pieces, and it was more than she felt able to bear. As she waited for the doctor's verdict, she repeated over and over, "I can't let him die. I can't let him die." But when her husband came from the sick-room, as gently as possible he gave the doctor's opinion. "There is no hope. He has double pneumonia."

"No hope?" she cried. "Who says so? The Great Physician hasn't said William must die. John, He can heal. He said, 'Ask, believing, and it shall be given.' Well, what's to prevent us from believing that? I'm not afraid to ask for the life of our son! You know we consecrated him to God when he was born." So saying she went into her room and laid her burden before the Lord.

That same night the crisis was passed, William fell into a natural and peaceful sleep, and their anxiety of the last few days was over. He had a long convalescence, and during that time did a lot of serious thinking. He thought of his mother's prayers and that his life had been saved. "Saved for what? Did God save my life for some purpose?"

The doctor and the minister were his regular callers. He thought about their work, one working to save men's lives, the other to save men's souls. "Which is the more important? What was that Father read this morning about the disciples? Oh, yes, they were to preach and heal. Preach and heal. Why, I have it. I can do both. I can be both a preacher and a doctor!"

William's decision to become a medical missionary met with the approval of his family as well as his pastor, but no one had the money to help him with his medical education. Undaunted he began to work and save toward that end. He finally went to New York City for his medical training, and received his degree from New York University.

He did not wait until he could go abroad to do missionary work, but

eager to be of service, he started a Sunday school and a mission for parents in a needy district of Toronto. He learned to play a cornet as an added attraction to his sister's organ to draw in the street urchins. In leading evening meetings for parents, William received his first experience as a religious speaker. This mission was to develop later into a large and important church.

Dr. Robert E. Speer, for many years senior secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, knew William Wanless as a medical student and candidate in the 1880's, and spoke of him as one of the most active and influential of Student Volunteers for missions, especially in interesting other medical students. Medical missions were then in their infancy. There was no body of experience and momentum; no furloughed doctors and nurses to tell the story; no literature on the subject. William Wanless wrote a booklet for student purposes, one of the first of its kind, which was widely used and influenced many to enter mission work.

When William went to Toronto for his last summer vacation from New York, he found a little sister ill with an incurable disease. The little girl was eager to see her brother, for she had a gift for him to take to India.

"I have something for you, William," she said, and she took a little purse from under her pillow and gave it to him. Opening it, he counted out forty cents in pennies and nickels.

William said, "Thank you, dear, but I would rather you kept the money to buy something for yourself."

"Oh, no, Willie," she replied. "You see, it is not just for you, but for the children of India. Use it for them. They need it more than I."

Wherever he later addressed audiences before leaving for his field of service, he showed the little purse and told of the sacrificial love of a little child who gave her all for the cause of foreign missions. By the time he sailed for India, the purse had increased to eight hundred dollars. This sum was carefully reserved for the day it could be used for the children across the seas.

The year 1889 was a momentous one in the life of William Wanless. In May he became 24 years of age, in June he was graduated as an M.D., in September he was married to Mary Marshall, a trained nurse who had helped him in his Sunday school in Toronto, and in November he arrived in India with his bride. Mary Marshall Wanless was her husband's able helper until her death from cholera in 1906. Dr. Wanless later married Mrs. Lillian Emery Havens, a Presbyterian missionary in evangelistic work in Kolhapur. Her service among the people of the Indian villages gave her the insight and sympathetic approach that was particularly helpful to Dr. Wanless in his work at Miraj.

II

THE INDIA to which the young Dr. Wanless went in 1889 was a great contrast to the India of today. It was far different in point of travel and communications. At best it took about two months on shipboard from America, with a change of ships in England. Mail took even longer. The air traveler can now be in Bombay in two days. There was then a wider gap in knowledge and understanding between India and America. India was thought of as an utterly distant, strange, and benighted land, if it was ever thought of at all. Conversely America was about as near to India as the moon and far less familiar.

The large cities of India are now well supplied with hospitals, clinics, and medical colleges which are part of the great university system established by the British. Some notable research work is going on. The Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine is one of the leaders in this field. There was very little even of the beginnings of all this when Dr. Wanless sailed for Bombay in 1889. It should also be said, to present a balanced picture, that even now the great mass of the people of India, who live in the villages, lack adequate and modern medical care.

In 1889 India, which then included what is now Pakistan, was a part of the far-flung British Empire. For some decades there was no popular organized move for independence. At the turn of the century Asiatic empires, with European rulers, were taken for granted by the mass of the people, both east and west. Americans in India were more or less vaguely, though increasingly, differentiated from Englishmen, but both were in general lumped together in the popular mind as the dominant people of the West.

By 1889, the British Raj had brought in many technical, social, and governmental improvements such as good trunk roads, railroads, the abolition of some glaring social evils, a limited system of public education, standards of efficiency and justice in public service, a unifying lingua franca (English), and in later years was to bring in many more. For the most part, however, India was still exceedingly primitive. The villages in which most of the 350,000,000 people lived, were small mud-walled, mud-floored hamlets, where life was lived intimately with cows and water buffaloes, goats, and chickens, and all too often with rats and monkeys.

Rats are the special bearers of bubonic plague, and make serious depradations on food. Monkeys are first-class marauders who also take their toll of foodstuffs. Both of these animal menaces, and plenty of others, come under the protection of the Hindu religious philosophy, which does not take life in any form or for any purpose. The deadly plague-infested rat, the ubiquitous malaria mosquito, and the sinister cobra, must not be killed or harmed.

Poverty with all its health implications was, and still is, the all too prevalent and dominant condition. The people were too poor to be adequately fed, so malnutrition was everywhere apparent. They were too poor to travel any distance for medical help, if there was any help to be had, and too poor to pay for it, if they could get to it. The British government did what it could but its efforts met only a pitifully small fraction of the total need. Moreover, ignorance and superstition continually blocked medical aid even when available. For example, a good Hindu or Moslem would rather let his wife die than call in a male doctor. In many instances auguries had to be consulted before any decision could be reached about seeking modern medical care.

Some idea of the ravages of disease is given in Dr. Wanless's records on the population of Miraj. In 1891 it was 29,000. Two years later it was reduced to 25,000 due to bubonic plague. Still later it was further reduced by a prolonged siege of malignant malaria. Worst of all was the influenza epidemic of 1918 and 1920, which levied a toll of deaths even larger than the plague.

In spite of inhibitions of superstitions and custom, the dire need of suffering people broke through when a trusted foreign doctor came on the scene. So it was with Dr. Wanless. The people flocked to him. His first setting and equipment were absurdly, not to say shockingly, primitive—a converted donkey stable.

"We must do something about it. I haven't the heart to keep turning them away. I came out here to treat sick people, and here are crowds, all needing immediate attention." So said Dr. Wanless to the senior missionary, his first morning in Sangli, in the Western India Mission. He and his bride had arrived the evening before in an aura of glory. Their welcome even included fireworks by the community.

William Wanless was the first doctor, and Mary Wanless the first nurse to be sent to this Mission by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. In his first daylight glimpse of his new home, Dr. Wanless's eye fell upon a large crowd of miserable-looking people squatting on the ground in front of the mission bungalow. He asked who they were and the missionary said they were sick villagers who had come to see the doctor. All the people there had heard that a doctor was arriving, and they had been coming every day, waiting for him.

It was obvious that they needed medical attention, and as Dr. Wanless scanned the crowd, he could see that many needed surgery. "I am not prepared to do anything for them," he said sadly. "I have nothing with me but my diploma and a small medicine case for personal use. The Board said I was to learn the language for two years, and I was not given one dollar for medical work. No one thought that there would be a clinic all ready and waiting for me."

He was distressed to hear the missionary tell these people that the doctor had come but could do nothing for them. Slowly and dejectedly the blind and the sick shambled out of the gate.

The next morning it was the same again. A crowd—waiting for the doctor. Again Wanless said, "We must do something about it. I haven't the heart to keep turning them away."

Then the missionaries held a council, and to help the doctor make a start, gave him for medicines an unused emergency fund, saying, "We think this is the emergency." In town they rented the only available place, a dilapidated donkey stable, saying, "The people think nothing of having rain come through the roof, and they always use the ground for a floor. All you need is a plank for a door."

With zest the doctor went to work, took the rough boards of his packing cases and made an operating table and shelves for bottles. He secured a small table and two chairs and the dispensary was ready.

Each morning the sick and ailing were on hand before the doctor arrived. In a few days, the need was apparent for a ward to take care of a few cases who might not be able to go home after surgery. Then the doctor succeeded in getting the use of a nearby open shed, which he laughingly called his "fresh-air ward." The first to use it was a boy who arrived in an oxcart, covered with a swarm of flies. The doctor found he had a gangrenous wound in the leg, so he said to the father, "I will have to cut off the boy's leg." "Oh, no, you don't, Sahib, that boy has to plow my fields, and he can't do it with one leg." "But, Baba, if I don't, he will die. You had better have a boy with one leg than no boy at all." Finally the father consented. When the boy was ready to leave for home, the ingenious doctor cut down a small bamboo tree, made a pair of crutches and taught him to use them. Both the boy and his father were pleased and very grateful. Some months later while the doctor was on vacation in the Panhala Hills they came to pay their respects to him. The boy on his crutches and his old father had laboriously climbed the steep path up the mountain from their village.

"Salaam, Doctor-Sahib," said the man. "We have come to make you a present for your kindness to us." He took from a bundle a live chicken and a dozen eggs. "Doctor-Sahib, we have been trying to live the Jesus-way which you told us about when you cut off my boy's leg, and to prove it we have brought to you the family's idols for we do not pray to them any more." These were produced from a second bundle. "And Sahib, we had a death in the family since we saw you and we wanted to have a Christian funeral but we did not know how. You taught us how to live but you did not tell us anything about this, so we just prayed in the name of Yesu (Jesus Christ) and Sahib, we took your name, too. Cannot you send our village a teacher, that we may learn more?"

Here in their shack dispensary, this pioneer medical couple, William

and Mary Wanless, had 7,000 patients the first year, and 8,000 the second. At the same time the doctor learned to speak the language fluently, and people paid him the highest compliment when they said, "Why, he speaks just like a high-caste Hindu."

III

DURING THE first two years in Sangli, Dr. Wanless on his bicycle scouted the countryside to find the best location for a much-needed hospital. He decided on Miraj, a city of 29,000 population 300 miles from Bombay, on the main railway line between Bombay and Bangalore. In Miraj there were many Hindu temples and one large Moslem mosque, which was said to have been built before Columbus discovered America. But Christianity had not come to Miraj. There was not one Christian there, and no one to proclaim the gospel message.

It would have been almost impossible for a foreign missionary to acquire land in Miraj, but a grateful patient who was a state official interceded for the doctor, and a site was obtained and the deed registered with permanent exemption of taxes. Since there were no contractors or skilled workmen to put up buildings, the doctor had to learn things for himself and be his own builder, mason, carpenter, and impart his slight knowledge to workmen unfamiliar with hospital architecture. To command respect and obedience, the boyish-looking doctor grew a beard, for many of the men wore beards.

The first unit was a Children's Block. At last the doctor could use his sister's mite for the children of India. Like the tiny seed which grows into the massive tree, so the consecrated gift of a little child grew into one of the largest mission medical plants in all India.

The new hospital was a large, two-story building of gray stone with red-tiled roof. The Board had sent the funds for it, a gift from John H. Converse, an elder in the Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Presbyterian Church which was Dr. Wanless's supporting church during all the years he was in India. Some years later, hearing of the splendid work done in spreading the gospel throughout the land by the Christian hospital, Mr. Converse exclaimed, "This is the best investment I ever made."

The hospital had its formal opening on July 4, 1894. In the dedicatory speech, it was stated that the aim and object would be the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Scripture texts adorned the walls. One of these texts was memorized by a patient before undergoing an operation. As he came out of the anesthetic and opened his eyes, he startled the doctor by saying to him, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me." Patients came from near and far, and the wards were always filled.

One ignorant old man from North India was asked why he passed by

many hospitals en route and came to this remote Christian hospital. "Because I heard that the Doctor-Sahib prays before he operates," he said.

While the medical work was developing, the evangelistic was not neglected. Soon after the hospital had its formal opening, there were converts to the "Jesus-Way" as it was called, and with the first sixteen a church was formed. This was the nucleus of the present large church at Miraj. For twenty years the congregation met in the hospital for Sunday services with Dr. Wanless, as elder, doing the preaching and his wife leading the singing with her baby organ. Later the congregation was able to support an Indian pastor and have their own church building.

The day came when the hospital and the Children's Memorial Ward could not accommodate all the patients who came for admission, even though some were put on verandas and on the floor between the beds in the wards. The fame of the doctor's surgical work spread far and wide. No longer did he have to urge patients to let him operate on them; they begged him to use his knife and take away their pain.

The doctor's skill attracted the rich, who often passed by large city hospitals to come to the Christian hospital, although they knew Dr. Wanless did not observe caste and preached a new kind of religion. Wealthy patients, after successful surgery, always wanted to express their gratitude in some way, and learning in astonishment that the doctor would take no personal fees but was working for them for love and not money, they looked for other things that they could do for him. They offered him the money to provide more buildings for his ever-increasing clinics. Thus a group of large two-story buildings was added to the Centre, the first of which was the gift of Mrs. Mugaseth, a Parsee lady of Bombay.

Next was the gift of a little Hindu widow, Mrs. Mansingh Lalsingh. One day she came to the doctor's wife and said, "My grandson has recovered and today we are going home. In appreciation for all the doctor has done, I would like to donate money for a building and have it named in memory of my late husband. Do you think the Doctor-Sahib will be willing to do this?" She was assured that he would. The building was named the Lalsingh Block for Women and Children.

Another gift was by a wealthy mill owner of Bombay and Ahmedabad. He was amazed at Dr. Wanless's hard work and self-sacrificing life and so pleased with the kindness shown him by the nurses and staff that he said, "I never saw anything like this in a government hospital." On the day of his departure, in great gratitude he said to Dr. Wanless, "I want to build you a large building. I see you need more room." In a short time, the Mofatlal Block for Men was erected, a beautiful white stone building of two stories, to which later a third story was added to serve as an isolation ward.

Many other wealthy patients gave large donations when they paid their bills, so that the hospital was soon on a self-supporting basis. From surplus receipts, Dr. Wanless built two more large buildings. One was an anatomical building for the Medical School, and another very large block was called the William Miller Clinical Block in memory of his dear friend who was pastor of the Bryn Mawr Church from September, 1874, until his death in March, 1907.

The ten private cottage-wards were gifts of patients or friends of the medical work. They were always filled with missionaries and other foreign patients. The missionaries came from various denominations at work in India, and they especially appreciated having a surgeon of fame near at hand, saving them expensive trips to America. The cottages were a boon to them, as they enjoyed the comforts of a home, made possible by the wife of the doctor. During Dr. Wanless's career he ministered to more than four hundred missionary patients. Nearly all were surgical cases, and all recovered except one emergency case undertaken in the hope of saving a life.

A glance at the hospital reports of those years is a glimpse of a surgeon's paradise. Almost every conceivable type of operation which could be performed at that time by general surgeons, plus many eye conditions, passed through the hands of the Miraj doctors and with such superlative success that their reputation drew patients from all over India and from countries beyond. Dr. Wanless was called "the Mayo of India."

"Sir," said a Brahmin to an American on the train to Bombay, "I have just come from Miraj. That is a wonderful place. I have watched those doctors. It is beyond understanding that such men who might amass wealth anywhere do that work for nothing but love and their own bare support."

IV

WHEN DR. WANLESS had opened his hospital to the public, the wards filled so rapidly that he wondered how he was going to take care of all the patients. He found that nurses were not his only need. He also needed an assistant. He secured a young Indian doctor from Bombay, but this man proved to be unsatisfactory. Then Dr. Wanless decided that he would have to train young men as assistants who could also serve in the villages where thousands were dying without medical care. In 1897 he started a medical school with a few Christian young men from mission schools who were willing to take medical training. He gave them books in English to study and daily classroom lectures. Most of each day he kept them with him at his clinics and at operations. As he visited inpatients and prescribed for them, he explained and taught. The result was that when these young men were

graduated they were ready to do good work as doctors and surgeons, having had more practical training than students in government schools. In 1916, this private school of Dr. Wanless's was affiliated with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Bombay, and the graduates were given degrees. In the course of the years it has trained hundreds of doctors.

Dr. Speer, who visited Miraj some thirty years after the beginning of the work, tells of visiting with the medical students—at that time a group of fifty—in the moon-lit quadrangle of the dormitory hostel.

"Here," said the student spokesman to Dr. Speer, "You can see India in miniature. We come from all parts of the land. We speak nine languages. We belong to different castes. If you ask what brings us all here, I tell you. First, it was Christ. Second, it was the fame of Dr. Wanless."

In telling of it afterward, Dr. Speer said, "What an honor to have one's name linked to the name of Jesus Christ."

"I saw," he said, "here and there, scattered all over India, doctors from Miraj taking their places beside missionaries, efficiently carrying on Christian medical work in mission hospitals and leaders in their communities. What a fountain of power that medical school is!"

Two graduates went as missionaries to foreign lands, one to Persia and one to Baluchistan. Some others were placed by Dr. Wanless in village dispensaries in his own mission. Ever mindful of the thousands of India villages without any medical service, he started six branch dispensaries under his supervision. These were from twenty to forty miles distant. In time four of these grew into hospitals, and the evangelistic work of the hospitals grew into Christian communities.

One of these which was typical of all was in Ashta, a town of ten thousand, twenty miles from Miraj. There was not one Christian there. One young doctor was sent to see if he could get an opening for Christian work. He sought out the leading men and made his proposition. When they learned that he was a Christian, they said, "Yes, we need a doctor, but we do not want a Christian."

He left discouraged, but was led of God to go back and try again. The next day he met a man whom he had not met the day before. The man said, "You say you are from the Miraj Hospital? Why, I know Dr. Wanless. I was a patient there. Did he send you? I'll see that you get a start. I own some shops which I rent. One is vacant, and you may have it rent-free and start your dispensary at once."

In a few years, Dr. S. B. Gorde had so won the love and respect of the people of Ashta that he was made a member, and later chairman, of the municipality. The once unwanted Christian had been chosen ruler of the city! He induced the city to open a public library. He instituted various reforms. He took care of the lepers and the outcastes. His dispensary grew into a hospital. He was given honors and medals by the

British Governor-General of that district for his outstanding medical and philanthropic work, and later received the Kaiser-i-Hind medal from the Viceroy of India.

One day Dr. Gorde came to Dr. Wanless and said, "Dr. Sahib, we are too crowded for church services in the waiting room of the hospital. There is a vacant lot for sale here. Can you secure it for us for a church?"

The church was built. Converts from all castes, high and low, came into the membership of this church. This beloved Indian doctor was used of God to build up a large Christian community there, and also others in surrounding villages. After nearly forty years of service he was retired, but as beloved elder of the church continued to be the leading figure of inspiration until his recent death.

"The most worthwhile part of my missionary work is the medical school which trains men to give relief, spiritual and physical, to their fellow men," said Dr. Wanless. The life of William Wanless was multiplied many times through the graduates of his school.

V

EYE DISEASES have always been prevalent in the East, and India is no exception. Many of these conditions are definitely preventable; filth, untreated ulcers, malnutrition, birth infections, all play their part. India seems to be par excellence the land of cataracts. Some of the famous men of India, contemporaries of Dr. Wanless's later years, operated on many thousands of cases annually. Dr. Wanless himself performed 20,000 ophthalmic operations, of which 13,000 were for the removal of cataracts.

There are few satisfactions to the surgeon comparable to bringing sight to the blind by means of the cataract operation. Dr. Wanless always found this a golden opportunity to bring home the Christian truths of his ministry. The following illustration, told in his autobiography now out of print, is one out of thousands.

"Ramchandra, why did you come all this distance for your operation?" we said. "I see by our chart that your village is over four hundred miles distant. There is a large government eye hospital much nearer to your village than Miraj. Why did you come all the way to Miraj?"

"Well, sir, there was a blind man in our village who had come to Miraj. He was led here, but returned home by his own unaided vision. That was some months ago, and he has been talking about it ever since. He told us of the operation which he says was done by a god-doctor. Everybody in that hospital, he said, was godlike. 'They gave me a bed to sleep on and blankets to cover me. They came every day to examine my bandage. They even sang hymns and told us of their great Guru, their Teacher.'

Well, hearing such nice things about this institution, I said to myself, 'I will go there,' and so I came. Doctor Sahib! Do you think I will see?"

"Well, Ramchandra, let us have a look. Yes, this is the day to remove your bandage. Now be careful. Do just as I tell you, and we will remove the bandage. There, now! I have taken off the bandage. We have darkened the room by closing the shutters. I want you to raise your lids slowly, very slowly, now. Don't squeeze. The light may irritate your eyes at first. Raise the lids gradually until you get accustomed to the light." The man did as he was told.

"Oh, yes, there is the window! There are the wooden beams in the ceiling! Oh! Why, I can see those other patients! Why, do you know, I have not seen a human face for five years, and here I see all these other patients about me, and I can see your face. Let me fall at your feet! I must! Oh, let me fall at your feet."

"Just you keep quiet in bed, Ramchandra. You might injure your eyes by getting up. We will let you go home in a few days."

"Oh, can I indeed! And see my children and my family! Why, I have not seen any of them for five years. Just groping about. And now, to think of it! I'll see them all and I can return to work. I am fed up on just sitting around doing nothing! Just to think that I'll begin to work again, and I won't need any one to lead me about! That, too, will be wonderful."

"Look here, Ramchandra. Let me tell you something. Your vision has been restored. Who was responsible for that?"

"Well, you, of course."

"Well, no, not entirely. Nineteen hundred years ago, a wonderful Doctor was born into the world. They called Him the Great Physician. He called Himself the Son of God, the Savior of the world. He opened the eyes of the blind. He made the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk. And He said, 'I am the light of the world. He that believeth in me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' He gathered around Him twelve disciples and sent them forth to help others. He commanded them to go into all the world and to do as He did. He healed the sick by His divine power. Because He came into the world, His present day followers, obeying His commands, came here. They established this hospital. But for His coming, this hospital would never have been built, and most probably you would never had your vision restored. I want you now to learn about Him. You have your eyes now, and you can read about the Great Physician in whose name and by whose power you have received new sight. You have received physical vision; now, Ramchandra, let Him give you spiritual sight. Believe on Him, accept Him, and when you go back to your village, tell others. Tell your family what great things Yesu Swami, the Great Physician, has done for you."

One blind woman in Portuguese Goa, who had been praying to her patron saint, Francis Xavier, was accosted by a Hindu friend who said, "Now you have been praying for days to your dead saint and he has worked no miracle for you. Why don't you go to the living saint? He opens the eyes of the blind."

"The living saint? Who is he?" "Wanless Sahib of Miraj." With her husband as guide, the woman made the long trek over the mountain range to Miraj. "The living saint," as she called the doctor, was able to help her and she was numbered among the thousands who received their physical sight at his hands.

To all, Dr. Wanless presented the Savior, Jesus. He said, "You believed and trusted me to give you physical sight, now believe in Jesus, the Light of the World. He can give you spiritual sight."

Along with the dramatic success of cataract operations there were always the pathetic patients with hopeless blindness. Heartbreaking scenes were all too familiar. A father had come over a hundred miles by oxcart bringing his small boy whose eyes had been completely destroyed by smallpox. Dr. Wanless writes: "We stopped work and spent considerable time trying to explain the boy's condition and our own impotency. But the father was not satisfied. He fell at my feet, held them and would not let them go. It was not easy to release one's self and continue work under the circumstances. When I finished the morning's work and went to breakfast, this father followed to my house. When I came out to return to the hospital, he was at the door. Further explanation. We tried to show our sympathy and convince him of our inability to help. He ran after me to the hospital, and there again he was sitting when I came out, and repeatedly during a good part of that day, he followed me about from building to building. Finally, when I finished the day's work, he threw himself across my path so that I had to step over his body to get by, and then further on, as I looked back, I observed him and his son standing at the rear of the cart with hands outstretched toward heaven in his appeal to God for what man could not do. Finally he climbed into the cart dejected and sad. He began his cheerless journey back a hundred miles over the hills, an object of abject sorrow and bitter disappointment. I cannot readily forget that scene, so typical of India's spiritual condition."

VI

THE MANY-FACETED services which Dr. Wanless rendered included public health campaigns in the Miraj community, especially in times of epidemics of cholera, influenza, and plague. Religious practices and prejudices against sanitary reforms are factors in

much of the disease prevalence in India. Cholera and influenza especially are spread by religious pilgrims, who travel by foot and camp by the roadside where hygienic and sanitary conditions are lacking. They carry disease back to their homes and it quickly becomes epidemic. Plague was epidemic throughout India in 1895, and reached Miraj the following year. At that time no one knew the cause of the disease and how to combat its ravages. It was a time of panic.

The city of Miraj formed a plague committee with Dr. Wanless in charge. As official for sanitation Dr. Wanless rode through the city on his bicycle, visiting every home, demanding that the occupants clean up their premises. Refuse was carted to the fields, but in spite of all precautions the plague spread. The people in the part of the city first infected were ordered to evacuate. Some had already fled in terror, leaving dead bodies locked in their homes. These were removed and the tile roofs of the houses taken off so that the direct rays of the intense tropical sun could penetrate and kill the germs.

A shack plague hospital was hastily built outside the city. Hundreds of patients were cared for by the doctor and his assistants. In those early days, when there was no known specific treatment, the mortality was very high.

Dr. Wanless in his autobiography goes on to write of this plague experience.

"A year or so after the first outbreak of plague in India, the rat flea was discovered to be the intermediary host and the carrier of the disease to humans. A great campaign of rat destruction was then undertaken in all infected areas. *Pari passu* with rat destruction the Jains and other Buddhistic communities began a counter campaign to prevent rat and flea destruction by releasing rats from the traps provided by the government to catch and destroy them. According to religious practice in certain Hindu communities the taking of life in any form, even that of a bedbug, is taboo. Nearly every sanitary reform in India has to contend with religious objection which adds enormously to the difficulties of hygienic and sanitary programs. This attitude and the profound and widespread ignorance of the masses interpose a handicap not experienced in any other country. Popular Hinduism thus becomes the enemy of modern progress."

Through government and other research the effective anti-plague vaccine was developed, and large-scale free inoculations were eventually instituted by the British government, with resulting decline in plague.

Some years ago the remark was made in the Miraj area: "Why is it that the Christians do not have plague the way the rest of us do?"

The answer was of course in the intelligent appreciation of medical knowledge. The Christians availed themselves more generally of immunization and they had no compunction about exterminating rats.

After Dr. Wanless had opened his hospital, it was with great regret that he had to refuse the admission of people with leprosy or pulmonary tuberculosis. It was not long until he found a way to start a colony for leprosy patients, building a home, dispensary, and chapel through the aid of the British Leprosy Missions. All the years since that time this work has gone on as patients come and go. Many are discharged as cured. An Indian Christian evangelist lives there and teaches them daily. Eventually nearly all become Christians. They have their own church. Dr. Wanless used to go there regularly to care for their needs. Each time he came back from furloughs these unfortunates would come out half a mile along the railroad tracks to wave and shout their welcome as the train slowly pulled into the station.

It was many years before Dr. Wanless found a way to care for patients with tuberculosis.

VII

DR. WANLESS ILL? I will take him the medicine myself," said the Maharajah of Kolhapur, as he came out of his palace to interview his caller, a missionary, who had excitedly told the sepoy guard to summon the Maharajah. "This is an emergency," she said.

The Maharajah emerged and courteously asked the lady what he could do to be of service. She said, "Your Highness, I am Dr. Marshall of the mission hospital here at Kolhapur, and I have come to see if Your Highness can lend me a car to take this medicine to Dr. Wanless at Miraj. He is ill and sent a messenger here on the train to get it, but the last return train has left. He should have it immediately, but we have only this one old car, not capable of making the thirty-mile trip."

The Maharajah expressed concern for his dear friend, Dr. Wanless, and exclaimed again, "I will take the medicine myself." Dr. Marshall handed over the packet with great relief. Taking it from her, His Highness jumped into one of his limousines and was driven speedily away.

When the Maharajah reached Miraj, without any announcement he walked right into the doctor's room and said, "Doctor, I have brought the medicine myself." Dr. Wanless was naturally surprised to see the Maharajah, and realized that royalty was taking the place of an errand boy for love of a missionary.

An intimate friendship had begun some time before between Dr. Wanless and the Maharajah when the latter had an accident while hunting in the jungle and came to the hospital for surgery. The Maharajah's life was transformed when he found friendship with God through his friendship with Dr. Wanless, and out of this friendship grew a deeper appreciation of the work which the missionaries were doing for his countrymen.

The Maharajah tried again and again to persuade Dr. Wanless to come to Kolhapur to be his chief medical officer and superintendent of a large hospital just completed. But the doctor would not leave his high calling as a missionary. Later the Maharajah gave Dr. Wanless a small but complete hospital plant in Kolhapur which was not in use since the new one was completed. Still Dr. Wanless hesitated, for he did not see how he could run two hospitals thirty miles apart. So he asked the Presbyterian Mission to use the gift as a woman's hospital and put a woman doctor in charge. He named it the Mary Wanless Hospital in memory of his first wife who had helped him establish the medical work of the Mission.

Then the Maharajah gave a 36-acre site to the Mission to build a Boys' High School, as he wanted a Christian school to which to send his sons. He gave other gifts of land, buildings, and money. He also built a residence near the Miraj Hospital, so that when the royal family needed hospitalization, he would not have to ask accommodation at the hospital.

The Maharajah was a very kindhearted man, and was always helping the poor. Among other things he opened a home for lepers, after seeing that Dr. Wanless cared for them in a home a mile from the hospital. Amazed at the amount of work the missionaries did in selfless service for the disease-stricken and the untouchables, the Maharajah said, "They have taken them and washed them, body and soul, and made them respected and honored. They have thus in their selfless devotion interpreted Christ to us. This is the reason for our changed attitude toward Christian missions."

Another gift was a surprise to the doctor who had wanted for some time a piece of vacant land across the street from the hospital. The owners would not sell. Saying nothing to Dr. Wanless, the Maharajah took it upon himself to secure that land for the doctor. He went to the owners and offered to give them in exchange any land they might choose in his state. One day he came to the hospital and said, "Doctor, here is something for you," and handed him a scroll. Opening the scroll, the doctor was surprised to find a deed giving title for the piece of land to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Thus a Hindu prince made a present to Christians in America!

The Maharajah was deeply impressed with the democracy of the Miraj Hospital where there was no distinction as to caste or wealth or race. He decided to apply these principles in his own realm, a most revolutionary idea. He issued an edict embodying a drastic set of rules which would wipe out all distinctions of caste at village wells, in schools and other institutions where caste was a public affair.

This brought an immediate violent reaction. The Maharajah was challenged on his authority for such an unorthodox innovation. The only answer that he could give to this was that he had seen those principles applied in the Miraj Hospital and thought it would be a fine thing to

introduce them generally. But the powers of tradition and privilege proved too strong for the time being and the Maharajah did not accomplish what he set out to do. The attempt led to serious disputes with his subjects, but it set people thinking. Not a few individuals were influenced to abandon or modify their rigorous adherence to caste practice. This abortive reform was an especially noteworthy venture on the part of a non-Christian ruler, as well as a fine testimony to the value of medical missions and Christian activity.

The Maharajah, not content with his unsuccessful attempt to abolish caste, became the sponsor of a widespread movement for the abandonment of untouchability. He became an early and enthusiastic supporter of the campaign still being waged by reform organizations throughout India. On one occasion while acting as chairman of a public meeting, His Highness was actually stoned by Brahmins because he had the temerity to sponsor this great movement. He continued to work for his ideal until the day of his death in 1926, and left behind a name revered by thousands of his loyal subjects, all of which could be well attributed to his contacts with a Christian mission hospital.

VIII

DR. WANLESS returned to the United States in 1928, as his health was impaired and he was due to retire in 1929, after forty years of service. In a letter written some time afterwards he described the life of retirement as dull. The master surgeon, the creator of a medical school, the peer and friend of princes and potentates, and above all, the devoted servant of his Master could not but find a life of idleness insipid. His heart was ever in India and his powerful creative mind was ever turning back to that beloved country. Out of frustration there sometimes springs creative action, and so it was with Dr. Wanless. His life had been one long response to human need, a habit that could not retire. His thinking dwelt on the great tuberculosis problem of India—one of the leading "captains of death" in that burdened land. What could he do?

Like Tennyson's Ulysses it was one last stroke to be struck before the end; one last stroke for the sufferers of India.

So it was that Dr. Wanless, a sick man, a physically broken man, returned in 1930 for one last splendid effort in India, his third major achievement. This was to create a Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Miraj.

It was a personal, single-handed campaign. He selected a site containing 104 acres of barren, unused land, out in the country two miles from the hospital. He borrowed money to pay for this and then started to raise funds. He laid the project before the public through articles in newspapers. He wrote letters to wealthy Indians and interviewed others. He presented the project on a radio broadcast from Bombay. Funds began

to come in, enough to pay for the land and start building, and money has continued to come in throughout the years. He sent two doctors from the hospital staff, one American and one Indian, to Calcutta for specialized training in the School of Tropical Medicine. He placed the doctors and a nurse at the Sanatorium and admitted the first patient, a Christian woman of Ratnagiri.

His dream of many years had come true. This Sanatorium was his last labor of love for the people of India. When he bought that barren land and built the first cottages for patients he could not have dreamed of its great future. It has had a most remarkable growth. The original twelve beds have increased to 400. The barren tract blossomed like the rose as trees, walks, flower gardens, and fine buildings adorned it.

The Sanatorium has many modern conveniences for the patients, notably a public address system of its own. Broadcasts can be heard all over the institution which covers fifty acres, and bed patients have earphones so that they can hear. At night there is an outdoor theatre where sound films are shown. All the cost of buildings, equipment, and upkeep have been contributed by the people of India.

In honor of the beloved founder, the institution was named "The Sir William Wanless Tuberculosis Sanatorium." In time people came and built shops and homes around it. A village grew into a town, and the town needed a name. Over this the Hindu authorities of the county debated. The name Wanless was proposed and Wanless it became. A post office bears the name, Wanless Sanatorium Post Office. The railroad which runs through the fields one-half mile distant opened a station for the convenience of the Sanatorium and this, too, was named Wanless.

Connected with the work of the Sanatorium were more than 150 Christian families living on the grounds. A full-time evangelist carried on work among them and a church was organized but there was no church building. One day a wealthy man gave the doctor in charge a large donation in gratitude for curing his daughter of tuberculosis. He had taken her to specialists in Europe, but since she grew no better, he brought her home. They lived only three miles from the Sanatorium, and someone proposed that he try the Christian hospital. He did so and she was healed. As the father presented the gift after paying the fees, the doctor said, "Am I to use all of this for the medical work?" The man replied, "It is yours to use as you please." "Well, we have no church here and I would like to build a church." The result was that a church was built in Wanlesstown just outside the Sanatorium grounds. Thus a Hindu built a church for Christians! This beautiful church, the largest in the Mission, was greatly appreciated by the Christians who in their poverty could not build one themselves.

IX

ON JANUARY 1, 1928, Reuter's cables spanned the world with the news that in the New Year's list of King George V, Dr. Wanless was the recipient of the order of Knight Bachelor (K.B.) of the British Empire. He was sent a gold knighthood medal and letters patent bearing the King's seal.

Twice previously he had received honors and gold medals from the British government for his philanthropic services to India. His innumerable Indian friends rejoiced, for now their beloved doctor could be called Sir William. They planned farewells and souvenir gifts. Sixteen farewell receptions were given in different places in one month before he sailed. The first one was by the students and alumni of the medical school. They unveiled a large oil portrait of Sir William to hang in their lecture room. They gave him a gold scalpel as a souvenir, as well as a silver box in the shape of a scroll embossed with a picture of the medical school and engraved with his name. Inside the box, rolled up as a scroll, was a beautifully decorated copy of the principal speech delivered at the reception. In the evening a banquet was given in his honor. Besides the students in residence, forty graduates who had returned for the occasion were present. It meant much to Sir William to see them again and to hear of their work for the Master.

Another farewell reception in which all classes of Indian society participated was given to Sir William by the people of the city of Poona in its largest theatre. In the audience were Parsees, Jains, Moslems, Hindus, and Indian Christians. Dignitaries of each class sat on the platform and each made a complimentary speech in farewell to their honored guest. The powerful Aga Khan, the religious ruler of the Moslem community, presided. In his address he said:

"We, the representatives of the different communities of the city of Poona, desire to take leave of you on the eve of your retirement from the field in which you have labored with such selfless zeal and remarkable success for the last forty years.

"During these years your enthusiasm has never grown dim, your courage has never lessened, and your faith has never faltered. You have kept before you two ideals, the glory of the Lord whom you serve and the service of suffering humanity. How well you have filled these ideals everyone with whom you have come in contact can fully testify.

"The story of the medical work is one of continued success. One small dispensary developed into a large medical plant of several institutions.

"If the Taj Mahal is a dream in marble, the Wanless Hospital is a dream in the art of healing. Affection for a royal spouse was the incentive of the one, love for the Lord and suffering humanity the incentive of

the other. You have been not only a healer, but you trained others in the art of healing; and two generations of students who have passed through your medical school bear ample testimony to the thoroughness of their training both in work and character.

"But of far greater value than your medical skill has been your Christ-like example. It has proved of great value in the regeneration of India, and has, in no small measure, contributed to the hastening of the coming of the Kingdom of God. We believe that your self-sacrifice, your patience, your unfailing courtesy, and your humility have had as much to do with your success in healing as your medical skill.

"You have been a missionary in the truest sense of the word and have ennobled the traditions of that high calling. Your work of healing has always been subordinate to the giving of the Gospel and you have rejoiced far more over a regenerated soul than a regenerated body.

"Your most fitting memorial is the hospital which you have built, and you can say with as much pride and truth as Christopher Wren, architect of St. Paul's Cathedral, said of his father 'If you wish to see his monument, look around.' In honoring you by conferring a Knighthood, the government has honored itself and the cause of which you have been so distinguished an apostle."

On behalf of the audience, the citizens of Poona, the Aga Khan presented Sir William with a large satin-lined silver box which contained a scroll on which his address was inscribed. With a heart full of appreciation, Sir William responded briefly. Afterward Dr. Nicol Macnicol, missionary of the Church of Scotland Mission, said that in all his thirty-five years in India he had never seen or heard of a meeting in which there was such unity of all classes.

When Dr. Wanless retired the Medical Centre which he had founded was the largest under Christian auspices in India and the medical school was the only Christian medical school for men in India.

A secretary of the Foreign Board has said that this is, no doubt, the greatest "one-man piece of work" in the history of medical missions. He also said, "Any one of Dr. Wanless's three outstanding achievements, the hospital, the medical school, and the sanatorium, was enough for one successful career." It is a remarkable fact that more than three-fourths of the cost of the hospital and medical school, and all of the cost of the sanatorium were given by the people of India. Grateful patients and their friends gave donations to the doctor because of love, gratitude, and appreciation of his unselfish and untiring services for the sick and suffering.

"This great Medical Centre," writes another, "stands as a permanent memorial to an eminently useful service for Christ and the people of India. This is his monument. Small wonder that Britain made a Knight of the saintly surgeon, or that India mourned when he was called to his

reward. While those skillful hands are at rest, the soul of William Wanless goes marching on. His works do follow him."

"Sometimes we are asked," wrote Dr. Wanless, "'Who was Jesus Christ?' We answer, 'He it is who is relieving you of your pain and freeing you of disease. Because He is here, we are here; but for Him these nurses, these medical helpers, the comforts of this hospital, would not be at your disposal. He is worthy of your faith. Believe in Him, accept Him as your Savior and you will find a twofold life, the saving of body and soul.'"

The enterprise which Dr. Wanless founded and directed for forty years, uniquely distinguished among medical missions, continues to go forward under the leadership of worthy successors.

BIOGRAPHY -

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